

# Pursuing Peace, Security and Nuclear Disarmament through our Common Humanity

*A joint Inter-faith and Values Appeal to the 2024 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Prep Com\**

As people of faith and associated values committed to building a peaceful, secure and just world, we appeal to the States Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to take the opportunity of the 2024 NPT Prep Com taking place at the United Nations in Geneva, to advance common security approaches to resolve international conflicts peacefully, end war and achieve the peace and security of a nuclear-weapon-free world

Today, our global community is faced with intense international polarization and armed conflicts that are more numerous and more destructive than at anytime since the end of the Cold War. This has elevated the risk of nuclear war considerably.

We are also faced with other existential threats to humanity and creation (the world) from climate change, ocean acidification and other serious risks to our planetary ecosystems, all of which are made considerably worse by international conflicts and war.

We approach these issues from principles and values which are shared across the world's major religions and faiths and by many values-based worldviews. These principles and values are similar to the basic tenets of international law, and if utilized better, could help governments to collectively navigate toward a peaceful and sustainable future.

These principles include justice, fairness, reciprocity, guardianship/stewardship, protection of creation (the world), common humanity, social responsibility, human dignity and respect.

How do these principles apply to the issue of nuclear weapons and the implementation of the NPT?  
We suggest the following:



**Protection of creation:** Nuclear war poses an existential threat to creation (the world). The most important objective of the NPT, as expressed in the first paragraph of the treaty, is to prevent nuclear war. Current policies and threat postures violate this objective.

*We encourage nuclear armed and allied States to prevent nuclear war and protect the world by taking all nuclear weapons off alert and adopting no-first-use policies as first steps toward the global prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. We encourage the NPT to affirm that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible and illegal.*



**Reciprocity:** Nuclear deterrence is based on threatening massive destruction on an adversary. This violates the principle of reciprocity, otherwise known as the 'golden rule' in many religions. Reciprocity is the principle that you treat others the way that you would want them to treat you. An approach that violates reciprocity is both unjust and unstable.

*We encourage States Parties to the NPT to affirm that their individual security relies on all States being secure. We encourage nuclear-armed and allied States to replace their reliance on nuclear deterrence with approaches that do not diminish the security of others and the world.*



**Common humanity:** The principle of common humanity holds that we are not solely individual people or individual nations, but that we also share a commonality of connection, home (our planet) and the future. In a way, we are all passengers on ‘Spaceship Earth’. Nuclear weapons divide us and prevent us from cooperatively managing our planet.

*We encourage States to affirm our common humanity and to better meet the challenges of today and tomorrow – including the threats of aggression - by utilizing and strengthening global governance institutions such as the United Nations and the International Court of Justice to build common security rather than relying on nuclear weapons.*



**Social responsibility:** The principle of social responsibility holds that everyone’s basic needs should be met and that no-one should be left behind. This principle is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals. The €90 billion equivalent spent each year on nuclear weapons development, production and deployment is draining resources (human and financial) that are required to eliminate world poverty and achieve the SDGs.

*We encourage States to acknowledge their social responsibility by ending investments in nuclear weapons and re-purposing these investments to address basic human needs.*



**Guardianship/stewardship:** The principle of guardianship/stewardship holds that humanity does not own the Earth, even if some land territory is divided into private property. Rather we are guardians/stewards of the world for current and future generations. Those of us living today should not pass on to future generations a continued threat of nuclear annihilation.

*We encourage States to recognize their stewardship of the earth for future generations by collectively committing to achieve the global elimination of nuclear weapons no later than the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NPT, commencing now with a negotiated, verifiable agreement. This could be a framework agreement, a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention or protocols to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which could provide for universal accession to the treaty.*

### **Your Excellencies, States Parties to the NPT,**

We encourage you to undertake these actions at the 2024 NPT Prep Com. And we encourage you to use additional opportunities provided by the United Nations to advance these actions further, including the UN Summit of the Future “*Multilateralism for a Better Tomorrow*” in September 2024, the UN General Assembly First Committee Session in October 2024 and the UN Summit for Social Development in 2025.

For our part as faith-based individuals and communities from around the world, we remain committed to working cooperatively with you and other stakeholders to build better global governance for a world which is secure for all from aggression and war, without reliance on nuclear weapons. Our diverse faith traditions remind us that we are not prisoners of our current reality. All of us are creative, resilient, and capable of creating a better and more secure world for current and future generations.

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*\* This Appeal is being coordinated by the [Transnational Working Group on Values, faith-based perspectives and global governance](#) for presentation to the NPT Prep Com at the United Nations in Geneva on Wednesday July 24, 2024. The Appeal is open to endorsement by faith-based individuals and communities. [Click here](#) to endorse (no later than Monday July 22, 2024).*